



SACRED FORMS

AUGUSTO LA FERE

ARS VERBI

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Sacred Forms

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Dedication

To the forgotten body of English — its sparks,
its portraits, its rhythms, its choruses, its closures.
May it remember its own weight.

“A gesture is small, yet it is total.
A hand lifted, a silence held:
each contains the whole of presence.”

— *Maurice Blanchot*

Order of Gestures

Preamble

Micro-Canticles

Portraits

Rhythmic Seals

Choruses

Sentences of Light

Postlude

Preamble

The Architecture of Gesture

This book began as an act of faith in what had been forgotten.

For centuries, the English tongue carried small vessels of play — limerick, cleriheW, nursery rhyme, double dactyl — and set them aside as curiosities. Yet even the slightest form can bear the full gravity of breath. *Sacred Forms* was written to test that faith: that levity can remember weight, that what was dismissed may endure.

Within the broader framework of the Poetics of the Embodied Gesture, each poem is conceived as a minimal act of incarnation — a gesture that precedes language and survives through it. The gesture is not metaphorical but somatic: it begins in the body, and through the body language becomes form.

I. Axioms of the Embodied Gesture

1. Minimality: the smallest complete gesture is sufficient to bear meaning.

2. Repetition as Presence: cadence inscribes the act into memory; recurrence is ritual, not ornament.

3. Naming as Incarnation: to name is to confer presence.

4. Closure as Weight: rhyme or cadence transforms breath into ground.

5. Breath as Measure: lineation follows breath; prosody is somatic, not abstract.

Each cycle corresponds to a gesture-function — spark, figure, seal, chorus, sentence — enacted through precise formal discipline so that embodiment remains literal, not symbolic.

II. Formal Architectures by Cycle

1. Micro-Canticles — gesture = spark

- *Meter:* anapestic bias with iambic substitutions at line heads; $L1/L2 \approx 8-9$ syllables, $L3/L4 \approx 5-6$, $L5 \approx 8-9$.
- *Rhyme:* AABBA shadow-retained; cadential fall at L5 (*“strike like a bell”*).

- *Diction*: no stock openers; one tactile noun per poem; abstract lexicon allowed only if grounded by touch.
- *Enjambment*: rare; when used, creates fracture, not flow.
- *Readability*: two uninterrupted breaths per poem.

2. Portraits — gesture = figure

- *Four lines*, one proper name.
- *Caesura midline* (the painter's pause).
- *Rhyme*: AABB optional; consonant and low-volume.
- *No anecdote*; parataxis, metonymy, concrete icon (hand/face/object).

3. Rhythmic Seals — gesture = imprint

- *Meter*: double-dactylic; spondaic landings at L4/L8 (— —).
- “*Long word*” rule retained (semantic gravity, correct scansion).
- *Opening*: invocatory percussion; no nonsense.
- *Breath*: one per quatrain; end-stop at final line.

4. Choruses — gesture = collectivity

- 3–6 lines; ≤ 9 words per line; high refrain density.

- *Marchable* cadence (2/2 or 4/4); antiphonal use (leader/people).
- *Lexicon*: ~400 common tokens (earth, step, bread, night).
- *Figurative economy*: parallelism, repetition; portable imagery.
- *Triple test*: readable as song, speech, or whisper.

5. Sentences of Light — gesture = closure

- *Meter*: iambic pentameter; one caesura per line.
- *Rhyme*: full or near; no witty turns.
- *Every couplet stands alone*; final punctuation audible.

III. Instrumentation and Proof

- *Breath and Step*: poems tested standing, pacing four counts per line (choruses) or two per hemistich (couplets). Lines rebuilt if breath faltered.
- *Lexical Heat-Map*: monitored recurrence of light, stone, breath, silence; excess tokens were retired or transformed syntactically.
- *Concrete Anchor Rule*: every abstract poem requires one tactile image (hand, gate, grain).

- *Acoustic Testing*: performed in closed, resonant, and open-air spaces for decay, echo, and communal clarity.
- *Voice Uniformity Guard*: rotation of sentence length, caesura, and phonetic texture to avoid monotony.

IV. Validation Protocols

- *Micro-Canticles*: AABBA shadow; L5 bell; one tactile anchor; no formulaic opener; two-breath limit.
- *Portraits*: one name; four lines with caesura; hand/face/object present; no anecdote.
- *Rhythmic Seals*: dactylic scansion; true “long word”; spondaic strike; legible aloud.
- *Choruses*: ≤ 9 words per line; refrain independent of context; clarity in all three modes; lexicon within corpus.
- *Sentences of Light*: iambic meter; one caesura; terminal stop; concrete within abstract.

V. Editorial Flow

1. *Composition* $\rightarrow$ *oral testing* $\rightarrow$ *breath adjustment*.
2. *Token mapping* $\rightarrow$ *replacement or mutation of overused lexis*.

3. *Timbre inspection* → *variation of rhythm and texture.*
4. *Mosaic assembly* → *alternation of tone, weight, and concreteness.*
5. *Closure sequencing* → *transition from communal voice to solitary vow.*

VI. Known Shadows

1. *Solemnity* at the expense of levity.
2. *Hermetic diction* — patience required.
3. Recurrence bordering on *litany*.
4. *Concept preceding sensual detail.*
5. *Authorial uniformity* — an intended asceticism.

These are not defects but consequences of fidelity: *gravity has its cost.*

VII. Toward the Living Gesture

Future extensions will attempt polyphony — multiple voices and humors within one discipline — without forfeiting weight.

Sacred Forms remains the skeletal phase: language upright, bones intact, awaiting flesh.

VIII. Technical Addenda

Breath & Step Metrics: two counts per half-line (couplets), four counts per full line (choruses).

Lexicon Policy: concrete over abstract; active verbs of endurance (walk, bear, lift, keep).

Punctuation: minimal; strong stops preferred; colons reserved for revelation (“The word is: stone”).

Capitalization: proper nouns only; devotional capitals sparingly (“Presence” when doctrinal).

Image Reuse Rule: no identical imagery across cycles; repetition requires transfiguration of function (noun → verb, object → gesture).

IX. The Radical Polysemy — “*Laferian*” Principle

Meaning in Sacred Forms is centrifugal, not linear. Each image or word — stone, breath, light, hand — operates as a field rather than a point. This deliberate radical polysemy transforms metaphor from decoration into structure: every utterance is both literal and ontological.

The poem, therefore, is not a vessel of fixed symbols but a chamber of resonances. A noun

may serve as object, verb, or prayer; a gesture may belong simultaneously to devotion, labor, and landscape. The density of metaphor is not excess but fidelity — the language insisting on its own layered body.

This is what later critics have called *Laferian Polysemy*: when each word carries several, even opposite, meanings at once and yet remains whole. Reading, then, is not about choosing one meaning over another, but letting them coexist — breathing through the tension until sense and silence balance each other.

X. Invocation

To reverse a form is not to adorn it; it is to turn it back toward its origin.

Each structure remains intact — rhyme, meter, brevity — but its pulse is altered. What once sought laughter now seeks stillness; what once repeated for pleasure now repeats for presence.

A limerick becomes a spark of silence.

A clerihew becomes a portrait of bone.

A double dactyl becomes a hammer of rhythm.

A nursery rhyme becomes a procession.

A heroic couplet becomes the stone that closes the circle.

The reader will find no narrative here, only gestures. Each poem is a movement of breath — entering, holding, releasing — and together they trace an ascent: from spark to figure, from figure to seal, from seal to chorus, from chorus to light. What links them is not story, but attention.

Words recur — light, stone, silence, breath — not to repeat, but to transfigure. Each returns altered, carrying the residue of its own echo. Through these metamorphoses, the book seeks a language that remembers its body.

To read *Sacred Forms* is to walk through the rehearsal of that remembering: to measure words by breath, silence by weight, play by endurance.

The wager is simple, and unending — that even the smallest song may still become a prayer.

Prologue

Before the word, there was waiting.
The tongue rested in its cave of bone;
the breath rehearsed a shape not yet known.

Then sound began — not speech,
but pulse: a hand meeting its echo.
Light bent itself into syllable.
Silence took form and called it time.

Each poem that follows
remembers that first fracture —
how stillness split
to let meaning breathe.

Part I – Micro-Canticles

(60 Limericks Transfigured)

I. Sparks of Origin

1.

Before breath, the world was a hush,
a sealed, unbeholden hush.
Then lungs found a flame,
and named us by name—
the wound of a cry through the hush.

2.

The threshold kept taut like a seam,
between cradle and hallway's seam.
One sole touched the stone,
and the body was known—
the world woke along that seam.

3.

A curtain unlatched into light,
undoing the grammar of night.
A hand learned to see,
by touching a tree—
the name of the morning was light.

4.

The first word arrived without word,
not spoken, but suffered and heard.

It entered the bone,
made marrow its throne—
and body became the first word.

5.

A seed kept its silence, still,

a vow prior even to will.

It split without sound,

put root into ground—

and nothing became what is: still.

II. Sparks of Mortality

1.

A candle collapsed into dark,
its smoke like a final remark.
The flame left no trace,
but ash on the face—
a silence that sealed the dark.

2.

A body once filled with a song
lay still, where no echoes belong.
The ribs held their frame,
but absence became
the hymn that will not be long.

3.

The breath that once carried a prayer
departed, left nothing but air.

The lips stayed apart,
stone fixed where was heart—
the plea still unspoken in air.

4.

A spark that refused to remain
was swallowed by shadow and rain.
Its light flared once more,
then fell to the floor—
and night bore the weight of its reign.

5.

No thunder, no trumpet, no call,
just the hush of a step as it fell.

One gesture withdrawn,
a silence at dawn—
death entering quietly, all.

III. Sparks of Memory

1.

A photograph yellowed with years,
still carries a shimmer of tears.

The eyes in the frame
repeat the same name—
and whisper what silence reves.

2.

A key without door in the hand,
recalls what it cannot command.
The lock has decayed,
yet echoes have stayed—
ghost metal that maps the unmapped.

3.

The scent of a book in the night,
returns like a flicker of light.

A page half-unread,
still murmurs the dead—
memory's secret of light.

4.

A child's forgotten refrain
emerges, uncalled, in the rain.
It circles the ear,
both distant and near—
a wound that insists to remain.

5.

A hand once withdrawn, now recalled,
still burns where the absence installed.
The gesture long past
persists as a cast—
a shadow that cannot be stalled.

IV. Sparks of Silence

1.

The word that refused to be said
lay heavy, a stone in the bed.
Its weight without sound
still alters the ground—
a silence more spoken than said.

2.

No cry, yet the body was heard,
a sob without shaping a word.
The pause was a wound,
the absence a tune—
a music that never was heard.

3.

The hush at the end of the psalm
endured like an infinite calm.

No verse to resume,
just vastness of room—
the hymn completed by calm.

4.

The listener leaned into void,
where sound was already destroyed.
Yet still the ear bent,
still waited, still lent—
its faith to what absence employed.

5.

The silence before the descent
was fuller than all that was meant.

It gathered the air,
refused to repair—
and spoke without saying what's meant.

V. Sparks of Fracture

1.

The glass in the hand could not stay,
it shattered in luminous spray.

The fracture was pure,
the break was a cure—
and nothing was whole in the day.

2.

A bone cracked the stillness of night,
a thunder concealed from the sight.
The marrow was torn,
yet form was reborn—
the fracture gave body its night.

3.

The wall that refused to contain
betrayed the foundation with strain.

A fissure appeared,
the silence was seared—
a scar as the truth of its strain.

4.

The voice that was steady grew thin,
a break in the hymn from within.
The song would not mend,
yet fracture could send—
a deeper refrain to begin.

5.

The earth split its skin with a groan,
revealing what should not be shown.
The rupture was vast,
but fracture could last—
an opening carved into stone.

VI. Sparks of Waiting

1.

A candle endured in the storm,
its wax bending out of all form.
It leaned yet it stayed,
through vigil delayed—
a body transfigured by storm.

2.

The gate held its silence for years,
its hinges were stiffened with tears.
No visitor came,
yet still it became—
a sentinel carved out of years.

3.

The clock in the hallway was dumb,
its hands without number became numb.
Yet someone still heard
its silence inferred—
the hour that never would come.

4.

A face at the window stood bare,
not moving, but fixed in the air.
Each second delayed,
yet still it obeyed—
the gesture of infinite stare.

5.

The night did not loosen its seam,
but tightened the thread of its dream.
The dawn was withheld,
yet waiting compelled—
a time without time in the seam.

VII. Sparks of Encounter

1.

At threshold a figure was seen,
uncertain, both foreign and keen.
A hand reached across,
erasing the loss—
the distance dissolved in between.

2.

The eye that was stranger became
a mirror that whispered a name.

The glance was a door,
not noticed before—
a summons disguised as a name.

3.

The rival approached with a blade,
but faltered where shadow had stayed.
The strike did not fall,
the gesture grew small—
and silence the truce that was made.

4.

The lover appeared in the rain,
and absence was broken again.
Two bodies aligned,
yet still undefined—
the meeting of hunger and rain.

5.

The beggar extended a hand,
a silence that asked without demand.
The coin was not weight,
but answer to fate—
encounter inscribed in the hand.

VIII. Sparks of Exile

1.

The path without border was wide,
yet nowhere permitted to hide.
The step had no home,
just dust to become—
a wandering with nothing beside.

2.

The tongue that was foreign was stone,
each syllable heavy, alone.

No listener near,
yet exile made clear—
a silence that spoke without tone.

3.

The city turned face from its guest,
refused him a corner of rest.

He lay on the ground,
where silence was found—
exile inscribed in the breast.

4.

The mirror reflected no name,
its silver refused to proclaim.
The face had no claim,
the exile the same—
a body erased from its name.

5.

The step became circle, not road,
no ending, no place to unload.

The exile remained,
by absence sustained—
a gesture without any code.

IX. Sparks of Prayer

1.

A whisper ascended the night,
too fragile to summon the light.
Yet heaven received
what earth had conceived—
a silence transfigured to night.

2.

Two hands in their hunger were raised,
not begging, but silently praised.

The gesture alone
became like a stone—
a psalm that refused to be phrased.

3.

The altar was empty of fire,
yet still bore the weight of desire.
No flame had been lit,
but waiting was writ—
the prayer that endures without fire.

4.

The plea had no answer to meet,
yet lingered, austere and complete.
It held in the air,
suspended as prayer—
a fracture no silence could meet.

5.

The final confession was brief,
a syllable shaped into grief.
No priest was at hand,
yet still it could stand—
the gesture itself the belief.

X. Sparks of Descent

1.

The stairwell gave way into stone,
each echo became its own tone.
The downward was vast,
yet step after step—
insisted the body alone.

2.

The pit swallowed light into shade,

no ladder, no path had been laid.

Yet still someone fell,

as silence would tell—

the downward no hand could evade.

3.

The rope that was steady grew slack,
and lowered the body through black.
The air had no end,
but still would descend—
a gesture that never looked back.

4.

The cliff drew the pilgrim to edge,
a drop without measure or pledge.
He leaned into fall,
yet found in the call—
a promise inscribed in the edge.

5.

The cave swallowed sound into root,
each step was a silence acute.

The deeper he trod,
the nearer to God—
descent as the root of the root.

XI. Sparks of Light

1.

A candle remained in the rain,
defiant against the domain.

It flickered, then grew,
ignited the view—
light birthing itself in the rain.

2.

A star through the cloud did appear,
a silence that shattered the fear.

Its distance immense,
yet wholly intense—
a word without sound, crystal clear.

3.

The lightning inscribed in the sky,
a fracture that taught how to die.
Its brightness was brief,
yet cut into grief—
a scripture inscribed on the sky.

4.

A lantern was lifted in night,
its circle became a respite.
The darkness withdrew,
its shadow grew few—
a haven was held by the light.

5.

The dawn like a wound in the east
split night with its infinite feast.

Its crimson was vast,
yet fragile, yet fast—
a promise concealed in the east.

XII. Sparks of Closure

1.

The word that was spoken as last
returned to the silence amassed.

It sealed what it gave,
a syllable grave—
a gesture that closes the past.

2.

The stone on the grave had no tongue,
yet uttered the weight of the young.
Its silence became
a sentence of flame—
a closure inscribed on the young.

3.

The flame that had burned through the night
collapsed into ashes of white.

Its end was its start,
its silence its art—

a closure that carried the night.

4.

Two silences leaned into one,
as twilight surrendered the sun.
No word to repeat,
completion was sweet—
the silence of two made as one.

5.

The spark that began as a breath
now folded its garment in death.
Its circle was whole,
its body a soul—
closure the crown of the breath.

Part II – Portraits

(40 Clerihews Elevated)

Cluster I – Figures of Flesh

1.

Eleanor, seamstress of dawn,
stitched silence into her cloth.

Her hands knew the hymn of thread,
her body bent into prayer.

2.

Thomas, keeper of keys,
forgot which door was his own.
He slept beside iron teeth,
dreaming of locks without end.

3.

Margaret, face at the well,

lowered a bucket of dark.

She drew up more than water—

she drew up the echo of thirst.

4.

Samuel, cobbler of streets,

hammered soles into stone.

The city walked on his rhythm,

but forgot the name of his hands.

5.

Agnes, weaver of candles,
trimmed wicks with patient breath.
Her flame endured in the chapel
though no one remembered her name.

6.

John, the nameless grave,
holds only a number of dust.
Yet grass has learned his silence,
and keeps it sharper than marble.

7.

Ruth, who carried water,
dropped her vessel at dusk.
The clay broke into silence,
her thirst completed the hymn.

8.

Edward, miner of depths,
brought coal to the light of the town.
He coughed a hymn of shadows
and was buried in the same black.

9.

Anna, who swept the church,
left traces of dust in her psalm.
The floor became her scripture,
her broom a pen of silence.

10.

Peter, the watchman of night,
stood still as the city forgot.
The dawn found him silent,
his post a monument of breath.

Cluster II — Figures of Memory

11.

Homer, blind at the shore,
saw more than the sailors could name.
His song was a raft of silence,
still crossing the centuries.

12.

Dante descended alone,
carving a map in the dark.
His pen became ladder and chain,
binding heaven to grief.

13.

Shakespeare, architect of tongues,
gave breath to the masks of the world.
Now silence repeats his cadence,
a theater built in bone.

14.

Milton, with sight withdrawn,
saw light where no eyes remain.
His darkness was filled with radiance,
his lines, a ladder of fire.

15.

Blake broke the sky with vision,
engraved the abyss with flame.
His angels still walk in silence,
bearing hammers of song.

16.

Emily kept her window,
and wrote as the garden grew still.
Her breath folded into white paper—
a psalm too narrow for speech.

17.

Whitman opened his body,
and sang to the crowd as one.
The grass became his scripture,
the wound became his hymn.

18.

Eliot sifted the ashes,
he named the dry bones of the waste.
In fragments he sought the whole,
in silence, a final word.

19.

Pessoa multiplied shadows,
each voice a fracture of self.
Lisbon became his mirror,
endless, yet singular still.

20.

Celan carried the ashes,
his tongue a wound without rest.
In silence he uttered rivers,
each word a stone of grief.

Cluster III – Figures of Myth

21.

Orpheus sang to stone,
and silence obeyed his lyre.
Yet the turning of one glance
unwound the whole song.

22.

Eurydice waited below,
a name suspended in dusk.
She carried the weight of absence,
more faithful than song.

23.

Prometheus lifted the flame,
his body chained to the sky.
The gift that was stolen endures,
fire carved into flesh.

24.

Icarus rose in light,
his wings dissolving in heat.
The sea keeps his syllable whole,
a grave of unending blue.

25.

Odysseus wandered the waves,
his name a map of delay.
Every island he left behind
was folded into home.

26.

Achilles stood in rage,
his shadow heavier than bronze.
A heel became his psalm,
a wound more vast than war.

27.

Antigone buried the breath
that empire denied its grave.
Her silence was sharper than edict,
her dust more just than law.

28.

Medea held her children
as witness against the gods.
Her cry split the world in two,
a hymn no chorus could heal.

29.

Odin hung from the tree,
his eye surrendered to night.
Runes bled into silence,
scripture carved into bone.

30.

Christ bore the cross of wood,
a gesture heavier than time.
His silence between two thieves
remains the axis of breath.

Cluster IV — Figures of Silence

31.

The Stranger at twilight
stood still on the road.

No word, only presence—
enough to divide the air.

32.

The Widow of ashes

kept vigil at stone.

Her silence was sharper
than all the trumpets of war.

33.

The Angel of dusk
held flame in its palm.

It did not speak a syllable,
yet the ground remembered.

34.

The Beggar of rain

extended his hand.

It carried the weight of the sky,

emptier than bread.

35.

The Watcher in night

had no face to recall.

Yet every step grew heavier

beneath his unseen gaze.

36.

The Child of no-name
cried once, then was gone.
The echo became his only flesh,
his cradle a wound.

37.

The Shadow that lingered
outlasted the flame.

Its silence was darker
than the fire it betrayed.

38.

The Pilgrim of dust
walked paths without end.

His footprints dissolved in the wind,
yet still they endured.

39.

The Voice without body
spoke only in pause.

Each silence became a command,
each breath, a decree.

40.

The Unknown departed
before it was named.

Its absence was presence enough—
a portrait of nothing.

Part III – Rhythmic Seals

(30 Double Dactyls)

Cluster I — Seals of Creation

1.

Hammer of silence,
Hammer of silence,
echoes inscribed in the
skin of the stone.

Pulse of beginning,
Inextinguishable,
world is a rhythm
that will not be gone.

2.

Waters unfolded,
Waters unfolded,
darkness was parted by
cadence of flame.
Breath of the shaping,
Irrefragability,
ashes were named into
being the same.

3.

Thunder repeated,
Thunder repeated,
striking the marrow of
night into day.
Form out of fracture,
Indivisibility,
bones of the cosmos were
hammered in clay.

4.

Voices uniting,
Voices uniting,
chanting the syllables
none could withstand.
Rising together,
Incommensurable,
chorus of bodies
engraved in the sand.

5.

Fire descending,

Fire descending,

brands into silence the
edges of breath.

Weight of the uttered,

Irrevocability,

seals every gesture

with promise of death.

Cluster II — Seals of Mortality

6.

Echo of heartbeat,
Echo of heartbeat,
slowed into silence that
no one can mend.

Body returning,
Irretrievability,
ashes inscribed with the
syllable: end.

7.

Graves without voices,
Graves without voices,
open and close with a
measure of night.
Weight of the nameless,
Inconsolability,
bone upon bone is the
seal of their rite.

8.

Falling of footsteps,
Falling of footsteps,
measured in cadence of
dust without rest.
Shadow repeating,
Irremediable,
death is the rhythm
that carves into chest.

9.

Crosses in silence,
Crosses in silence,
lifted where language is
broken in air.

Blood as an anthem,
Irreversibility,
singing of endings
that none can repair.

10.

Night of forgetting,
Night of forgetting,
names are dissolved in the
weight of the ground.
Breath becomes absence,
Ineluctability,
death is the hammer,
the final resound.

Cluster III — Seals of Memory

11.

Voices returning,
Voices returning,
shaping the silence with
ghosts of the word.
Shadows remembered,
Irreplaceability,
what has been uttered
can never be blurred.

12.

Dreams of the absent,
Dreams of the absent,
walk through the corridors
no one has kept.
Hands without bodies,
Inextirpability,
hold what the sleepers
forgot as they slept.

13.

Book without binding,
Book without binding,
pages inscribed by the
ashes of time.

Every remembrance,
Indestructibility,
marks with a cadence
more solemn than rhyme.

14.

Photo of silence,

Photo of silence,

faces that linger when
voices are gone.

Frame without motion,

Immateriality,

memory keeps what
was never withdrawn.

15.

Echo repeating,

Echo repeating,

calling a name that will
not disappear.

Absence made present,

Irremovability,

memory's rhythm

still hammers the ear.

Cluster IV — Seals of Exile

16.

Wanderer walking,

Wanderer walking,

step after step with no

resting of ground.

Road without ending,

Inconsolability,

seals him in silence

where borders are found.

17.

Tongue of the stranger,
Tongue of the stranger,
fractures the cadence of
home into stone.

Speech without echo,
Incommunicability,
every syllable
exiled, alone.

18.

Gate without welcome,
Gate without welcome,
shut to the hand that was
raised in the rain.

Face of the foreign,
Irrecoverability,
seals into exile
the gesture of pain.

19.

Steps into nowhere,
Steps into nowhere,
circles of dust that will
not find their end.

Body unrooted,
Inapplicability,
wanders in silence
no border can mend.

20.

Mirror without face,

Mirror without face,

shattered by exile of
names never said.

Form without homeland,

Invisibility,

absence inscribed on
the glass as the dead.

Cluster V — Seals of Prayer

21.

Hands lifted upward,

Hands lifted upward,

syllables rising like

smoke into sky.

Hymn without answer,

Inalterability,

prayer is a rhythm

that will not comply.

22.

Whisper unspoken,
Whisper unspoken,
stillness that gathers the
weight of the plea.
Silence as scripture,
Irrefutability,
words are inscribed in the
breath set free.

23.

Altar without flame,
Altar without flame,
waiting for fire that
will not descend.
Candles unlighted,
Inextinguishability,
still hold the rhythm
that silence will send.

24.

Knees on the cold stone,
Knees on the cold stone,
bodies inscribed with the
weight of the ground.

Supplication,
Impossibility,
prayer is the hammer
that carries no sound.

25.

Chant without ending,

Chant without ending,

breath is repeated until it is pure.

Circle of voices,

Indefatigability,

psalm without measure

that always endures.

Cluster VI — Seals of Light

26.

Flame of beginning,
Flame of beginning,
brand on the silence that
darkness conceals.
Spark into beacon,
Inextinguishability,
light is the hammer
that carves into steel.

27.

Star in the vastness,
Star in the vastness,
holding the night in a
circle of fire.

Radiant silence,
Irrefragability,
seals into heaven
the weight of desire.

28.

Dawn overwhelming,
Dawn overwhelming,
fractures the marrow of
night into red.
Crimson as scripture,
Irreversibility,
light is the psalm that
is sung for the dead.

29.

Lantern unbroken,

Lantern unbroken,

circle of refuge in

tempest and rain.

Fragile endurance,

Invulnerability,

light is the rhythm

that shelters from pain.

30.

Lightning inscribing,
Lightning inscribing,
bones of the sky with a
hammer of flame.
Word of the thunder,
Incommunicability,
light is the seal that
engraves us by name.

Part IV – Choruses

(50 Nursery Rhymes Reborn)

Cluster I — Choruses of Earth

1.

Step and step again,
dust becomes the road.

We walk, we walk,
until the ground remembers.

2.

Stone under stone,
weight under weight.
The earth is not silent,
it carries our breath.

3.

Grain in the field,

bread in the hand.

We break, we share,

we are not alone.

4.

River repeating,
water returning.
We drink, we live,
we thirst again.

5.

Roots in the soil,
roots in the song.
The tree does not move,
yet shelters us all.

6.

Hammer to ground,

shovel to stone.

The work of the hand

becomes our hymn.

7.

Rain on the furrow,

rain on the seed.

The earth gives back

what silence keeps.

8.

Footprints behind us,
footprints ahead.

The path we endure
outlives our names.

9.

Clay in the fingers,
vessel of dust.

We shape, we break,
we shape again.

10.

Earth, O earth,
hold us in your silence.

We are your echo,
we are your weight.

Cluster II — Choruses of Night

11.

Darkness around us,
darkness within.

We walk in shadow,
we do not stop.

12.

Moon without answer,
stars without name.

The night is a mirror
that shows us our face.

13.

We light no fire,
we bear no flame.

Our eyes are the torches
that endure the night.

14.

Sleep does not hold us,
dreams do not come.

We keep the vigil,
we keep the watch.

15.

Owls in the branches,
wind in the leaves.
We hear the silence
more than the song.

16.

Night repeats night,

step repeats step.

We move without ending,

we move without rest.

17.

The cry of the wolf,
the silence of stone.
We are between them,
we endure.

18.

Midnight is heavy,
midnight is long.
We breathe together,
we remain.

19.

Stars above,

dust below.

We are between them,

we are their echo.

20.

Night, O night,
teach us your silence.
We carry your shadow,
we carry your weight.

Cluster III — Choruses of Travail

21.

Hands are weary,

feet are worn.

Still we carry,

still we bear.

22.

Bread is broken,

water is gone.

We hunger, we thirst,

we endure.

23.

Tools in the field,

tools in the mine.

The earth resists us,

yet we persist.

24.

Whip on the back,
chain on the hand.
Still we walk forward,
still we sing.

25.

Walls are rising,
stones are laid.
Our labor builds
what outlives us.

26.

Cry of the worker,
cry of the child.

Both are the same,
both are the psalm.

27.

Blood in the furrow,

tears in the grain.

The harvest remembers

what the hands have given.

28.

Road of exile,

road of pain.

We walk together,

we walk still.

29.

Weight of the burden,
weight of the years.

We do not falter,
we do not fall.

30.

Travail, O travail,
you are our seal.

We sing through your chains,
we sing through your fire.

Cluster IV — Choruses of Hope

31.

Dawn is rising,
dawn is near.
We lift our eyes,
we rise with it.

32.

Flame in the lantern,

flame in the heart.

It does not go out,

it does not die.

33.

Rain returns,
the seed endures.
Life begins again,
life begins.

34.

Hands are lifted,

hands are free.

Hope is the silence
that becomes a song.

35.

Star on the horizon,

song on the road.

Both are our promise,

both are our guide.

36.

We do not see,
yet we believe.
The hidden light
is still our path.

37.

Voices together,

voices one.

Hope is a chorus,

hope is a march.

38.

Spring from the winter,
fruit from the root.
Hope is the branch
that breaks the frost.

39.

Tears are gathered,

tears are sown.

They will be harvest,

they will be joy.

40.

Hope, O hope,
you are not gone.
You walk with us still,
you walk.

Cluster V — Choruses of People

41.

We are many,

yet we are one.

One step, one breath,

one ground.

42.

Voices rising,

not one alone.

Together they form

a pillar of sound.

43.

Hands interwoven,

hands held fast.

We move as a body,

we move as one.

44.

Name upon name,

face upon face.

The people are countless,

the people endure.

45.

We march in silence,
we march in song.
Both are the same,
both are the way.

46.

No king among us,

no throne above.

The people are crown,

the people are law.

47.

We are the chorus,

we are the ground.

We make the silence,

we make the sound.

48.

One step forward,
another behind.

We move as procession,
we move as tide.

49.

Even in death,
we are not lost.
The people remain,
the people remember.

50.

People, O people,
we are the seal.

We carry the weight,
we carry the light.

Part V – Sentences of Light

(60 Heroic Couplets)

1.

The smallest spark can split an iron night;
One breath, well kept, becomes a sentence: light.

2.

We learn the weight of silence by its breadth;
It teaches speech to end, and calls it breath.

3.

A name endures when lips forget it so;
The ground remembers where the feet must go.

4.

The wound that will not close refines the heart;
Pain chisels stone, and calls its carving art.

5.

The path becomes a law beneath our tread;
We walk the word our earlier bodies said.

6.

The lamp is small, the corridor is long;
A little oil outlives a vaster wrong.

7.

What breaks returns in stricter, gentler guise;
The fracture teaches bones another rise.

8.

The hand that waits accomplishes its oath;
Delay is covenant to hope in both.

9.

The dead do not depart; they change the air;
We breathe them in, and know that they are there.

10.

Whoever keeps a vigil keeps a door;
The city sleeps, but watch is law once more.

11.

The seed consents to darkness, learns to rise;
It dies into its grain, and fills our eyes.

12.

The dust we stir will hold our shapes when done;
The earth has memory deeper than the sun.

13.

The prayer without an answer answers still;
To hunger toward the light is holy will.

14.

We look for signs and find them in the least;
The crumb outlasts the banquet and the feast.

15.

The mercies that we asked for never came;
The mercies that we lived became our name.

16.

The law of ash completes the law of fire;
What burns, once finished, clarifies desire.

17.

The mother's hands, the miner's coal-scarred face
—
Their hidden liturgies uphold this place.

18.

The book we never finished taught us more;
We learned to close it, stand, and be a door.

19.

A field well-worked becomes a creed of ground;
The plow confesses what the roots have found.

20.

The threshold is a teacher of the feet;
We learn to halt, to bow, and not retreat.

21.

The stranger bears a mirror in his face;
To welcome him is learn our hidden place.

22.

The tyrant thunders, breaks, and leaves a stain;
A whisper outlasts thunder, grain by grain.

23.

The widow's copper warms a colder night;
The useless coin becomes a forge for light.

24.

The word we needed most was simply: stay;
It placed a stone where storms had cleared the
way.

25.

To keep a covenant, repeat a step;
The vow is made in walking what we've kept.

26.

The poor man's table sets a royal law;
He breaks his bread—and breaks the fear of awe.

27.

We measure wealth by what we can release;
The open palm is treasury of peace.

28.

The water taught the rock to give its face;
It polished hardness into quiet grace.

29.

The truth is cold, and yet its cold is clean;
It rinses eyes to make their seeing keen.

30.

When justice walks, it shortens long deceit;
It takes the crooked mile and makes it meet.

31.

The devil bargains; light refuses trade;
The price is paid already: debt unmade.

32.

The temple falls; the mercy does not fall;
The place collapses, Presence fills the hall.

33.

A father's silence steadies frightened knees;
He says no word—and yet the winds appease.

34.

The wound you guard will master you by fear;
The wound you show becomes a place to hear.

35.

A fragile cup can carry holy fire;
Clay learns to shine by serving one desire.

36.

The river does not hurry yet arrives;
It teaches time to love the way it drives.

37.

The faithful doubt with candles in their hands;
They light their questions, walk the darker lands.

38.

No sermon taller than a tended grave;
The grass interprets what the stones engrave.

39.

The narrow gate admits a vaster air;
Small doors expand the rooms of those who
dare.

40.

The ready fist is poor in what it knows;
The open hand receives the truth it sows.

41.

We cannot heal by hiding what is torn;
The scar confesses how a mercy's born.

42.

A single table mends a scattered town;
The meal says "ours" where walls had said "our
own."

43.

The drought instructs the river how to bless;
We learn the depth by seasons of distress.

44.

The gate of sorrow opens into praise;
We bless the hand that numbered burning days.

45.

The truth is not a knife we throw at night;
We set it on the table, serve it light.

46.

The page we write with tears does not erase;
The ink becomes a mirror of the face.

47.

The king is measured by the least he feeds;
His throne is set on bread, not iron deeds.

48.

The Sabbath is not idle but a law;
It binds the hand to wonder, rest, and awe.

49.

The tongue that blesses cannot scorch the field;
It sows a rain the fire will have to yield.

50.

To bear insult without a hidden sneer
Is build a bridge that heavy carts can clear.

51.

The first to kneel is usually the free;
He chooses where to place his liberty.

52.

We drink from wells we did not dig alone;
To thank the dead is set a proper stone.

53.

The truth that burns will also warm the room;
The hearth and pyre share the selfsame bloom.

54.

The night will end; it always ends the same—
With quiet birds rehearsing light by name.

55.

The holy life is simply debts repaid;
We reckon kindness as the truest trade.

56.

The patient craftsman measures twice, then cuts;
The haste of kings leaves palaces as huts.

57.

The righteous anger ends before the night;
It lays the sword aside and keeps the light.

58.

We cannot horde the dawn, we only lift;
Light is not owned; it is received as gift.

59.

The final word is gentler than we fear;
It speaks our name and draws the whole of us
near.

60.

The book must close, but not its quiet flame;
Walk with its light—and let your steps be name.

Epilogue

Now the circle closes,
not with completion but return.
Every sound has fallen back into breath,
every line has folded its weight.

The hand unclenches.
The light forgets its name.
What remains is the small vibration
between word and silence —
the place where both agree to stay.

Walk until the cadence leaves you.
Then listen:
the echo is the gesture
becoming yours.

Postlude

This book was never meant to conclude. It was built to remain in motion — a sequence of gestures that persist beyond their utterance. To finish Sacred Forms is not to close it, but to let it breathe elsewhere.

If the wager has held, even briefly, then language has remembered its own pulse: that sound begins in silence, that form is a body of waiting, that every cadence is a kind of kneeling. What was comic has turned solemn not by denial, but by patience.

These pages do not seek novelty; they ask for endurance. A gesture becomes real only when inhabited. Whoever reads, speaks, or recalls one of these small forms carries it forward — and the procession lengthens by a single step.

The work continues, quietly, in the breath that leaves your mouth after the last word.

Biographical Note

Augusto La Fere (Lapa, Paraná, Brazil, 1973) is an author and essayist. His writing moves between philosophy, memory, and the metaphor of landscape, exploring the tension between silence and the word. Founder of the Ars Verbi™ imprint, he is dedicated to the artisanal and digital publication of works under free licenses.

His notable publications include *O Legado* (2013), *Clown* (2014), *Cartas para Ninguém* (2017), *Cinza de Bronze* (2020), *Silêncio Alto* (2024), and *Antes que Derrubem* (2025). He lives and works in Paraná, also engaged in cultural initiatives promoting the dissemination of free literature.

Colophon

Sacred Forms was composed within the framework of the *Poetics of the Embodied Gesture*, which holds that every act of language begins in the body and returns to it.

Conceived in five movements — *Micro-Canticles, Portraits, Rhythmic Seals, Choruses, and Sentences of Light* — this edition affirms that no form is too small to bear gravity, and no rhythm too slight to remember silence.

Written and prepared in Lapa, Paraná, Brazil
under the imprint *Ars Verbi*TM,
in the year when language learned again
to stand upright in its own light.

